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Voice of the people

Soviet 'violations' and arms talks

CHICAGO—As new arms control discussions are readied, charges of Soviet violations of past agreements have resurfaced. As an article in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists recently made clear, the allegations were made by an ex-CIA operative and adopted in a report by the inept General Advisory Committee, whose members oppose the SALT II agreements and are more concerned with dismantling existing arms controls than in advancing them. No government agency monitoring Soviet compliance had any hand in the report, which alleges 17 breaches, either direct violations, circumventions or breaches of unilateral commitments.

Twelve of the "breaches" have been investigated by previous administrations and did not result in

any charges of violations. Others are based on distortions of agreements, as, for example, in charging that port calls in Cuba by Soviet nuclear submarines contravene Soviet pledges or that passage of a Soviet warship through the Turkish straits violates the Montreux Convention. Similarly, an alleged Soviet breach of SALT I turns out to have been satisfactorily resolved in discussions between the U.S. and USSR.

The revival of these discredited charges is clearly intended to condition public opinion against the upcoming arms control negotiations. Any currency lent the report by the administration will poison the atmosphere and suggest that the U.S. is not seriously interested in reaching new arms controls but will even try to undermine those already achieved. S. Weiss